



## Walk 1 - Walton Hill

An ancient pagan community originally settled on the top of Walton Hill and, in due course, an Anglo-Saxon settlement was established here. They gave their home the name of Walton, which comes from the Saxon words 'weald' and 'tun', meaning a 'walled settlement'. Walton is listed in the Domesday Book of 1086, and it became the religious centre of the 'Hundred of West Derby'. This term describes the geographical forerunner of a shire, and was an area that could raise an army of 100 fighting men in times of war.

The Hundred covered an area than ran from West Derby itself, as far as Meols to the north of Southport, across through Ormskirk, and on to Wigan. It also stretched east to include Warrington, and south to the River Mersey. It also included the originally tiny community of Liverpool.



## Points of Interest

### 1 The Peoples' Club

Liverpool's first, official, Football Club was Everton FC, which was originally attached to the local St Domingo Methodist Church, which once stood on Breckfield Road North. The Minister, Rev Ben Swift Chambers (1845-1901), became concerned that the young men of his parish had little to occupy their free time productively. So, in 1878, he established a football team, called St Domingo FC, to 'keep his lads off the streets'.

The team became very popular and, at a public meeting, in November 1879, held in the Queen's Head pub in old Everton Village, it was agreed to change the team name to Everton Football Club. However, the newly constituted club soon adopted the nickname 'The Toffees', because of Molly Bushell's famous Everton toffee.

By 1844, the club were playing their matches on a field that would eventually become the site of the present Anfield Stadium of Liverpool Football Club; but Everton FC were there first!

This land was owned by John Houlding, a wealthy brewer, an Alderman, a Justice of the Peace, and a former Lord Mayor of Liverpool. He was also the President of Everton Football Club. Nevertheless, he decided to increase the rent he was charging his own football team to £100 a year, and then to £250 a year. By 1892, Houlding had increased the Club's rent twice more, which angered many of his fellow board members, players, and supporters. This led to a split in the football club and George Mahon, a respected local figure and the organist at St Domingo's Church, took the disgruntled people, and the Everton FC name, to an ambitious new home on the north side of Stanley Park, called the Mere Green Field.

This was soon re-named as Goodison Park; a rock-strewn wasteland that was cleared and laid out by the Everton FC players and supporters themselves. The ground, stadium, and stands that they then created became the first major football stadium in the Country, and was the sporting wonder of Victorian England. It was from this time that Everton Football Club became known as 'The People's Club'.

### 2: Speech Hill

Spellow Lane was named after Spellowe House, which had been built by the Spellow family, sometime around 1270. This stood near a small hamlet called Mare Green, which was on the site of modern Stanley Park.

The Spellows were wealthy and important local Anglo-Saxons who had taken their name from nearby Spellowe Hill, which translates as 'Speech Hill', and is where Goodison Park now stands.

'Spellowe' also translates as 'to speak' or 'to discuss', which indicates that this was once the location of a very important ancient parliament or civic meeting place. It is also likely that this was also the site of a powerful Saxon Chieftain's burial mound, which has long-since vanished. Spellowe House was demolished sometime after 1881, when Spellow Lane was laid out.

### 3: The Owen and William Owen Elias Streets

The Elias family were Welsh builders who came to Liverpool in the late 19th Century, where they constructed many terraces of streets throughout Everton and Walton, between County Road and Goodison Road.

They decided to immortalise themselves in the process, so spelt out the name of their Father-and-Son firm - 'Owen and William Owen Elias' - in the initial letters of the names that they gave the streets they created.

In order, these are:

Owen, Winslow, Eton, Neston, Andrew, Nimrod, Dane, Wilburn, Ismay, Lind, Lowell, Index, and Arnot Streets.

On the other side of County Road, the sequence carries on with Makin, Olney, Weldon, Euston, and Nixon Streets.

To complete the run, the sequence is reversed on the other side of Bedford Road, with Elton, Liston, Imrie and Astor Streets, and then Stuart Road.

William Owens's son, E. Alfred, who was the third generation in the building firm, decided that he did not want to be left out of this game, and so he built Espin, Askew, Linton, Frodsham, Ripon, Emery, and Dyson Streets.

All of these streets still exist, and they are home to thriving communities.

### 4: The Tudor School House

In the corner of the burial ground of St Mary's Church, adjacent to the wall of the Black Horse pub, stands the delightful old Tudor School House. It still has the original mullioned windows and doorway, with a date-stone that reads '1548': Although, the schoolhouse probably dates from 1515, when it was opened for 'poor boys of the parish'.

Its thick walls are built in local sandstone and, originally, it was probably thatched but now has a slate roof. Its modern floor was originally one of beaten clay, scattered with rushes for warmth and cleanliness.

With a succession of schoolmasters over the centuries, paid for by the parish, the building became a Sunday School and parish assembly rooms, sometime in the 1820s.

Always in continuous community use, it is now a day nursery, crèche facility, and meeting hall. But it remains one of only two, surviving, original Tudor schoolhouses in Liverpool. (The other can be seen in the Camp Hill and Woolton tour.)

### 5: The First Christians & St Mary's Church Walton-on-the-Hill

The summit of Walton Hill has always been an important site of religious ceremony and worship, and an ancient, Pagan stone-circle once stood there. This was destroyed by militant monks from Lindisfarne, who first brought Christianity to the local community, and to the north west of England, during the Dark Ages around AD650.

They built the first St Mary's Church on the old Pagan site, and this was made of wattle and daub with a thatched roof. This structure was listed in the Domesday Book.

The original building was replaced by the first stone church on the site, and this was rebuilt and restored many times over subsequent centuries.

St Mary's was once the parish church of the whole Hundred of West Derby, including tiny, fledgling Liverpool, but much of the old church was destroyed by incendiary bombs in the Second World War, during the May Blitz of 1941. However, the tower miraculously survived, as did the 1000-year-old Saxon font, which still serves the church and congregation today. An equally ancient Saxon cross is kept inside the church, and a replica of this stands outside the church, overlooking the graveyard.

## 6: Ancient Monks & The Burial Ground

Just after the Norman Conquest, of 1066, Benedictine monks now came to Walton-on-the-Hill, and they built a small abbey alongside the church. Remnants of the wall of this medieval structure may well remain in the wall surrounding the churchyard. Near here was the burial place of these clerics and, whilst their bodies still lie here, there are no markers showing their graves.

The entire burial ground is ancient, but none of the tombstones are older than the 18th century. Part of a Victorian hearse-house remains, with a lintelled doorway, and the graveyard is surrounded by high walls and railings.

Even though set in the heart of a busy network of roads, the silence of the graveyard can be tranquil and restful during the day. The sun breaking through the trees speckles the tombstones with flickering, golden fingers of light, but this is still an atmospheric and mysterious place.

At night, however, the graveyard can feel very scary and ominous, especially when the wind is whistling, the branches are creaking, and the leaves are scratching. Then, and with the tombstones shrouded by the branches and leaves of very old trees, it is fingers of moonlight that now break through the canopy. These creep across the graves and weave and crawl across the ground like groping hands! Perhaps it is then that the shades of the old monks may be seen in and around the cracked and fallen stones.

## 7: The Plague Pit

Also located at the top of the hill near the church, although no one can be precisely sure where, is a medieval plague pit. The remains are still here, of the tragic people who died as a result of this highly contagious and invariably fatal pestilence. The disease was the Bubonic Plague, known as the Black Death, and it ravaged Merseyside intermittently, between 1348 and 1369. The people of Walton were very badly stricken.

The pit that they dug on the hill was very soon filled with the dread disease's victims. There were so many bodies, in fact, that the surplus had to be buried in the grounds of the old Liverpool chapel of Our Lady and St Nicholas, on the shores of the River Mersey at the bottom of Chapel Street, in the small town. Liverpool itself lost almost half of its population ~ about 500 people ~ during this period.



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Two hundred years later there were further outbreaks of the plague, right across the Hundred of West Derby. These occurred in 1558, 1610, 1648, 1651, and in 1656. As a result of each epidemic the population of the entire district suffered great losses, but especially in Walton and Liverpool.

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## Walk 2 - Everton Ridge

It is likely that Roman invaders married local women and settled in and around what was to become Everton Village. The name 'Everton' comes from Celtic-Roman 'evoracum', meaning 'wild boar', and it is listed in the Domesday Book, of 1086.

The hill and Ridge is the highest point in north Liverpool (at 250 feet above sea level), and Everton Village was once surrounded by common land, comprising heath, furze bushes, and poor pasture. The community slowly grew, on the summit and flanks of what local people then called 'Sandstone Hill'.

From the Middle Ages, Everton was an important township in its own right. This was because the villagers held their lands in return for a yearly rent and service paid directly to the King, which made them a very proud and independent community.

Everton remained a typical, small, relatively isolated, rural community, and the population remained static for centuries. Even in 1801, there were only 499 people living at and around the top of the Ridge. However, this would transform beyond all recognition, into one of the most densely-populated parts of Liverpool, following a massive influx of people from the mid-19th century onwards.



## Points of Interest

### 1: The Necropolis

As the population of 19th century Liverpool began to dramatically increase, the demand for places to bury the dead became urgent. Private investors now saw a business opportunity, and large tracts of land around the town were bought, and developed as landscaped cemeteries. One of the largest and imposing of these was the great 'Liverpool Necropolis' or 'City of the Dead', which stood at the corner of Everton Road and West Derby Road.

Opening in 1825, it was designed by the Town Architect, John Foster Jr. (1787-1846), at a cost of £8,000. The cemetery had been created mainly for Dissenters and Non-Conformists of all denominations, such as Baptists, Methodists, and Unitarians, and it proved very popular. So much so that, by 1898, it was completely full and had to be closed.

Now Liverpool was very short of open land for public recreation space and parkland, the Corporation bought the cemetery. In 1912, all the monuments were removed and the headstones laid flat. These, and the great vaults and tombs, were all turfed over and landscaped. The massive front gates, the 13 feet high wall, and the original lodge house were demolished, and railings put around the site. It opened as Grant Gardens, in 1914, and is a popular park. However, few people now realise that, as they stroll, play games, or walk their dogs, they are doing so on top of the 80,000 corpses that still lie there!

### 2: Nob Hill

From Grant Gardens, Everton Road leads along the top of the Ridge, towards the site of all that remains of the original village. Along the road can be seen some surviving 18th century former town houses. Whilst some of these are being restored, many remain empty and derelict; however, they show that this was once an extremely desirable residential district.

In fact, as Liverpool Town became more heavily-populated, it became overcrowded, smoky, and unhealthy. Those people who had the means to do so, now moved up to the top of Everton Ridge. Here, they either established their households in terraced town houses, or they built large, detached, mansion houses. Many of these were surrounded by large gardens, and had accommodation for servants, as well as adjoining stables and carriage houses.

Accessed from driveways off the tracks and roads running across the Ridge, these grand houses gave their owners outstanding views across the countryside, river, the Wirral, and the Irish Sea. It also provided them with space and fresh air. Then still 'out in the country', Everton now became an enclave of the wealthy and important; the 'Nob Hill' of Liverpool.

### 3: Everton Village

Not only did Everton Ridge and the Village become a country retreat for the rich, but it also became a major tourist destination for ordinary people. They were also drawn here by the views, the open space, and the fresh air, but also by some very special attractions in the village itself.

There were one or two bakeries selling delicious pies and pastries, and these were very popular. Nearby too were a number of taverns, where foaming tankards of fine ales were

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being quaffed in quantity by happy and enthusiastic visiting Scousers. But, one of the most popular attractions was Molly Bushell's Everton Toffee Shop.

Molly had been born in 1746, and lived in a cottage (built around 1690) on Browside in the Village. She began making and selling her tasty sweets, from her cottage, in 1753, and this was soon in great demand across the district, the town, and beyond. Because of this she converted her cottage into a shop, in 1783.

Molly died in 1818, but the recipe stayed in her family and continued to be sold in the village, but now from different premises. Its popularity grew, and was regularly being bought by some very famous people, including Charles Dickens and Queen Victoria. The last Toffee Shop in Everton Village was pulled down in 1844.

Whilst the tourists brought welcome revenue to the village, they also brought unruly and often drunken behaviour. The villagers became so concerned about this that, in 1787, they built the Village Lockup in the centre of the village green. Drunkards and other miscreants were locked up overnight, until they sobered up, or until the magistrate could hear their case.

Whilst the rest of old Everton Village has been demolished, one or two of its original streets remain. However, the only building to have survived is the Lockup. An image of this appears as the central image in the logo of Everton Football Club, which also has the nickname of 'The Toffees', after Molly Bushell's famous confection.

#### 4: The Crows' Nest

In 1644, during the English Civil War, the Town of Liverpool was held by Parliamentarians, but it was known that the Royalists were on their way to capture it for King Charles I. The population of the town then stood at around 1,000 people and, as the enemy troops advanced, the women and children of Liverpool were evacuated to Seacombe and Wallasey for safety. This left around 400 to 500 men and youths defending the small town, from behind their walls and barricades.

The 24-year-old nephew of the King, Prince Rupert of the Rhine, marched to the outskirts of Liverpool with 10,000 troops, on the evening of the 1st June 1644. To get a strategic view of the small town he stationed his army on the top of Everton Ridge. He commandeered a cottage in the heart of the village to use as his headquarters. This became known afterwards as 'Prince Rupert's Cottage', and was another tourist attraction until it was demolished in the mid-19th century.

From his high vantage-point Rupert looked down on Liverpool and declared that it was, "Nought but a crow's nest that a parcel of boys could take", and he prepared to besiege the town. For over a week he continuously bombarded the town from canon arrayed along what is now Lime Street, and he killed around 40 people. But the townsfolk put up a fierce resistance, continuously fired back at Rupert's forces, and killed over 1,500 of his troops!

Eventually though, on the 11th June, Rupert attacked and captured the town, but only after slaughtering 300 of its inhabitants ~ "some that had never borne arms .... yea, even one poor blind man".

Rupert stayed in the town for nine nights before moving on to York, on the orders of King Charles I. It took the survivors and returning women and children six months to finish burying their dead.

#### 5: Everton Beacon

The tallest structure in the ancient village of Everton was once the Fire Beacon. This stood on the highest point of the Ridge, where St George's Church now stands, and roughly in the position of the east corner of the present building.

It was 6 yards square and about 25 feet high, and was constructed in plain stone. There was a viewing platform on the roof with a guardroom below, and a kitchen area at ground level. Opinions vary as to when it was built, but most authorities believe that it was constructed in 1230, during the reign of King Henry III (1207-1272), probably as a watch tower.

However, it was also used as a warning beacon during the expected invasion of the Spanish Armada, in 1580. Indeed, in that year the beacon fire was lit atop Everton Ridge, as soon as the Spanish Fleet was sighted off the coast of England, as were all the other beacons around 'this blessed plot set in a silver sea'.

After this, the Beacon was yet another tourist attraction at Everton, around which, on fine days, hundreds of people would gather on the grassy slopes to picnic and relax.

Throughout the period of the Napoleonic Wars when, in 1760 an attack on Liverpool by the French fleet was expected, local soldiers were stationed on the Beacon and instructed to light the warning fire if the foreign ships were sighted. Barrels of turpentine and pitch were kept in the guardroom for the purpose but, fortunately, the enemy fleet never came and this time the Beacon fire remained unlit.

Towards the end of the 18th century, the Beacon was becoming unsafe and was in a very bad state of repair. It was about to be demolished when, on a very stormy night in 1803, it blew down anyway. Nevertheless, the war with the French continued in full force and a warning system was still needed. And so, it was agreed to adopt the very latest technology, and a mechanical Semaphore Station was built to replace the Beacon. However, this was abandoned after the Battle of Waterloo and the final defeat of the French, in 1815.

#### 6: The Cast Iron Church

In 1815, and to celebrate the English Victory over the French, it was decided that a new church should be built on the Ridge. So, in that year, the old Semaphore Station was pulled down, and a public subscription was organised that raised £11,500 towards the new building. A wealthy local merchant, named James Atherton, owned the land on which the beacon and station had stood, and he now donated this for the building of the magnificent Saint George's Church.

As the site was being cleared and foundations laid, the bodies of two Roundhead soldiers were unearthed. These were believed to have been spies from the Town, trying to see what the Prince was up to. Perhaps they had been discovered, summarily executed, and just buried beside the Beacon wall. We shall never know!

The architect of the new church was Thomas Rickman, and it was built by the skilled ironfoundryman, John Cragg. He was the proprietor of the Mersey Iron Foundry that once stood in Tithebarn Street, and a pioneer in the use of cast iron. Between them, the two men created a building that is both outstanding and innovative in its technical construction, and beautiful in its design and decoration.

Rickman and Cragg also built the cast iron church of St Michael-in-the-Hamlet, near Aigburth, and both buildings were used as 'demonstration models'. They showed how the churches could be bought in 'kit-form' and were 'ready to assemble'. Rickman and Cragg had seen a business opportunity in the increasing demand for churches in Victorian Britain, and for ones that could be easily erected in crowded areas or on difficult terrain. Did 'IKEA' pinch their idea?

#### 7: The Jewel on The Hill

Everton Library, on St. Domingo Road and at the very summit of Everton Ridge, was once home to a technical college as well as a public library. It stands on the site of the grand mansion that gave the road its name; St Domingo House. This was the home of a wealthy slave owner named George Campbell, who named his mansion, which looked like a miniature gothic Cathedral, after a French ship that he had captured off the coast of San Domingo (now the Dominican Republic) in the Caribbean.

When the mansion was pulled down and the land had been cleared, the new library was opened, in 1896, at a huge cost for the time of £11,300. It was designed by the then City Surveyor, Thomas Shelmerdine, and is a fine example of combined Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts design.

With its separate reading rooms for ladies, boys, and the general public, and over 25,000 books, the library was a much used local amenity. However, with the massive decline in the local population, the library was closed in 1999. It remained neglected and deteriorating since that time.

However, the Heritage Works Buildings Preservation Trust, working with local organisation, Hope Street Ltd, and Liverpool City Council, has received all the funding necessary to fully restore and re-open this glorious building, as what has now been named 'The Jewel On The Hill' project. Before too long, Everton Library will once again open its doors, and will provide fully modernised resources to the local community and visitors alike.

### Walk 3 - The Toxteth Ridge

Toxteth is one of the most ancient parts of Liverpool, and is listed in the Domesday Book as 'Stochestede'. This may derive from the Old English term for 'the stockaded place', which comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'stocc', meaning 'stake', 'stede', meaning 'place'.

In 1207, King John (1167-1216) made 'Leverpul' the harbour for his conquest of Ireland, and he liked the heavily forested area between what was then Aigburth Heath and what is now the city-centre, especially the area of the Stochestede Forest. John bought this large tract of land from the Molyneux family who owned all of this part of southern Liverpool at that time, and he then created a 3,000 acre Royal Deer Park here for himself and his knights. He completely enclosed it as a hunting reserve, for deer and wild boar, and surrounded it with palings and then stone walls that stretched for a circumference of 5 miles.



## Points of Interest

### 1: The Ancient Chapel of Toxteth

In the early years of the 17th century, Puritan refugees from Bolton, Ormskirk, and the Midlands, came to settle in Toxteth, particularly around the Dingle and Otterspool. Here they found a safe-haven from persecution.

The new settlers in Toxteth needed a schoolmaster for the new schoolhouse that they had built at the bottom of what is now Park Road. Richard Mather was invited to accept the post, even though he was only 15 years old. He was successful and popular, but then he went away to complete his studies.

In the meantime, the local Puritans added a chapel to their existing schoolhouse, and these buildings survive as The Ancient Chapel of Toxteth. Richard returned to Toxteth, this time as their Minister and he preached his first sermon in the newly-built chapel, in 1618.

But persecution continued, and to escape, Richard Mather and many members of the Toxteth Puritan community travelled from Liverpool to Plymouth. From there, in 1635, they set sail to the New World with the 'The Pilgrim Fathers'. Mather's ship was tiny and named the 'Mary and John'. Once in America, he continued to preach, in Massachusetts, until his death in 1669. His son, Increase Mather, and his grandson, Cotton Mather, became presidents of Harvard and Yale Universities respectively.

In the days when Park Road was just a track leading to King John's former Hunting Park, the Dingle Brook ran through the district, passing down a rocky dell that gave 'The Dingle' its name. Local tradition has it that during the English Civil War (1642-51), Cromwell's troops camped in and around the Chapel to get shelter, and to water themselves and their horses from the Dingle Brook.

### 2: The Pioneer Park

Princes Park was the first public park to be opened in Liverpool, but it was originally created as a private business venture. It was the idea of a local entrepreneur, Richard Vaughan Yates (1785-1856).

With the Industrial Revolution, of the 18th and 19th century, there was a rising 'new-aristocracy' of upper middle classes in Liverpool. These socially-aspiring people could not afford grand estates, but this is where Yates came in.

So that these people could have the nearest thing possible to a grand house in private grounds, he bought a large area of land from Lord Sefton, and from other local landowners. Next, he employed the famous landscape gardener, Joseph Paxton (1803-1865), to design a large, attractive park, with a rolling landscape, shrubs and trees, watercourses, a lake, pathways, and beautifully laid-out gardens. Then, he built large, detached, mansion-style houses around the park perimeter. The high prices that he charged for these, not only paid for the design and creation of his beautiful park, but also gave him an income.

Opened in 1842, the wealthy residents now had free access to their own, private estate at the centre of their new community. However, Yates did open his park to the public, at certain, limited times of the week.

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The whole scheme was considered to be such a good idea that, in 1863, the Corporation of Liverpool passed a resolution to build a number of public parks around the City, and to use Yates's method to fund this great project. Their intention was to provide 'room to breathe' and healthy recreation for the working classes of the Town who were otherwise trapped in the grime and grind of the town. The present ring of large, urban, public parks around the City is a lasting tribute to their foresight, imagination, and dedication to the health and wellbeing of ordinary Liverpool people.

### 3: The 'Boulevard'

This road, which leads through Toxteth to the south of the City, is named 'Princes Avenue' on the left of the central reservation and, on the right, as 'Princes Road'. These roads, which were opened in 1846, are known locally and collectively as Princes Boulevard, for obvious reasons, because they combine to make one of the City's many tree-lined avenues.

From the late 19th century, until the 1950s, the central part of the Boulevard was once the site of the tramway that ran from the city-centre out to the southern suburbs of Liverpool. The City's tramways were one of many imaginative civic projects carried out in Liverpool, by one of our greatest City Engineers, John Alexander Brodie (1858-1934).

The Boulevard bisects an area of once-luxurious Victorian and Edwardian mansion houses, complete with accommodation for the family-servants. These still face the impressive avenue but are now mostly multi-occupancy dwellings and apartments.

Nevertheless, the Boulevard was once also the route that the 'great and the good' and the local gentry drove down, in their carriages, to then ride around the perimeters of Princes Park and nearby Sefton Park.

### 4: The Japanese Art Gallery

Towards the end of The Boulevard, standing at number 5 Princes Road, is an imposing building that was once the home of wealthy merchant, James Lord Bowes (1834-1899) and his family. Built in 1872, and named 'Streatlam Towers', it is a stately example of late-Victorian architecture, with its towers, mullioned and lancet windows, and tall chimneys. However, one of the building's outstanding features is its distinctive, round, staircase tower with its fairy-tale castle roof.

To the left of the main building protrudes a separate entrance to a roofed passageway. This once led to the 'Bowes Museum of Japanese Art-Work', which James created, and opened to the public, in 1890, as the first dedicated museum of such art in the western world. The pediment of this small and unassuming doorway, and the stone tracery halfway up the main building above, are decorated with chrysanthemum flower heads. These are one of the symbols of Imperial Japan.

As well as portraits and paintings, also on display were books, fine silks and textiles, costumes, ivory and wooden carvings, ceramics, porcelain, exquisite lacquer-ware, and other artefacts. The museum was open throughout the year. The money he made from entrance fees was used to support local churches and the work of charities in Liverpool.

In April 1891, James hosted a 'Japanese Fancy Fair' in his museum. This attracted 20,000 people in six days and raised £5,290 (£580,000 at today's value), which was all donated to

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charities in the City. In May 1891, James was awarded the 'Japanese Order of the Sacred Treasure, 4th Class', and, in February 1897, he received the 3rd Class rank of the same honour.

James Lord Bowes died, on 27th October 1899, of a heart attack, suffered whilst travelling on a train from London to Liverpool. He is buried in Toxteth Park Cemetery, on Smithdown Road in Liverpool.

## 5: Places of Faith

On either side of Streatlam Towers, and across the road, one of the finest collections of Victorian places of worship in Europe can be found.

Here stands the Church of St. Margaret of Antioch, which was designed, in 1869, by George Street, who went on to design the London Law Courts in 1871. It was built by Robert Horsfall, a member of the family that built many of Liverpool's churches. The outside of the building is pretty, if somewhat simple and plain, with a small statue of the Saint set in an ornate niche above the front entrance. Inside however, the church is richly decorated with marble and tile, and the walls are painted with stencilled decorations of flowers and the images of saints.

Here too is the Princes Road Synagogue. This was designed and built, in a Moresque style, by architects

W & G Audsley, and it was consecrated on 3rd September 1874. The costs for the project were met completely by local fund-raising and, at the time, this was the largest synagogue in Britain – accommodating as it does, up to 900 people. It is a richly decorated and impressive building with a high, vaulted ceiling, which is beautifully carved and decorated.

At the end of the nave and overlooking the wide central space is a great rose window. This not only adds light, but also emphasises the magnificence of the interior. This is certainly one of the most beautiful synagogues in Britain, and perhaps in Europe. Because of this it welcomes visitors from all over the world, whether of the Jewish Faith or not.

Across the road is the splendid, Byzantine-style, Greek Orthodox Church of St. Nikolas. This was paid for by the Greek community in the town when, in 1863, they began a fund-raising appeal. Within an hour more than half the building's cost had been raised! Work soon began on this outstanding red-brick church, with its four, windowed, domed, drums, and it was designed by the famous architect, Henry Summers. When it was first completed, in 1870, this was only the second Greek Orthodox Church in England.

Inside, the altar is backed by a tall, broad, carved oak reredos, which is punctuated by panels depicting religious scenes and images of the Saints and Patriarchs. The glass chandeliers suspended on long chains, the white walls, and the carved stone pulpit, which is reached by a curving wooden stairway, all add to the charm and romance of this lovely building.

## 6: Money on the Move

Almost at the end of Princes Road, and next to the Greek Church, is the former NatWest Bank. The original building on this site was completely gutted during the Toxteth Riots, in

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July 1981. This was because local people believed that the Bank was investing in South Africa, and therefore bolstering the racist Apartheid regime in that country. This made the building a particular target during the disturbances.

After the Riots, the frontage and main part of the bank were completely rebuilt, using money provided by the Government. This was a truly unprecedented response, but the administration of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher recognised that an important gesture of economic commitment to the Toxteth Community was necessary. It is a shame though, that it took the worst civil disturbances on the British mainland, since the Civil War, to drive home that message!

However, the rear of the building was not damaged in the riots, and it was here, beneath a long awning, that a teller's window had originally been built. Overlooking a driveway, this provided the first, purpose-built, Drive-In Bank in Britain. This unique facility had been an integral part of the bank's design when it first opened, in 1959. Motorists could now drive up to the window to deposit or withdraw their cash whilst 'passing through', and without having to get out of their vehicles!

#### 7: The Lady with The Lamp

Mounted in the wall at the corner of Princes Road and Upper Parliament Street can be seen a large monumental plaque, with a recessed seating area. This was unveiled in 1913, and it is specifically dedicated to Florence Nightingale (1829-1910) but also to nurses in general.

It was paid for by public subscription and, such was the feeling of gratitude to Florence Nightingale for her contribution to the development and professionalising of nursing and hospital care in Liverpool, that the fund was five times over-subscribed!

The wall in which the memorial is placed surrounds what was originally a purpose-built nursing training school. This was established in 1898, by Florence, in collaboration with the local philanthropist, William Rathbone (1787-1868), to train District Nurses.

Rathbone had been prompted to involve Florence Nightingale in the improvement of local nursing services, after coming to recognise and value the work of the nurse, Agnes Jones, who Rathbone had employed to oversee the nursing regime at the new Liverpool Royal Infirmary.

Florence Nightingale died in 1910, having been awarded the Order of Merit in 1907. She lies buried, not in Westminster Abbey as many people think (she declined the honour), but with her parents in the village of Embley in Hampshire, where she had been born.

## Walk 4 - Mossley Hill and Sefton Park

What is now Mossley Hill was once part of the wealthy 'Manor of Alretune' or 'Allerton', and is listed in the Domesday Book as being held by three Thanes – a Thane being the Anglo-Saxon equivalent of a Knight. After the English Civil War the manor was seized by Oliver Cromwell and, over subsequent years, it was divided up and was owned by a variety of different wealthy families.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Mossley Hill and the district that would become Sefton Park became the district of choice for the new breed of merchant 'landed gentry' who sought to create their own smaller forms of stately homes with miniature grand estates. They saw themselves as the 'new English Aristocracy', and many grand mansions were built around the high hill with its spectacular views.



## Points of Interest

### 1: Church of St Matthew & St James

The parish Church of St. Matthew and St. James, Mossley Hill, is an impressive example of the Decorated Gothic style of church architecture. It was originally designed and built, between 1870 and 1875, by Hubert James Austin and Edward Paley. It was funded using the proceeds of a legacy from an 1830s visitor to the district – the wealthy merchant Matthew Glenton, who felt that Mossley Hill was ‘... a wonderful site for a church’.

This monumental building stands 188 feet above sea-level, dominating the hill, and it can be seen for miles around towering over the landscape. It has a singular claim to fame, in that it is said to have been the first church in the country to have been bombed during the Second World War. This was in August 1940, when the building suffered almost total destruction. Completely and magnificently restored, it was rededicated in 1953, and the church has fully resumed its place at the heart of the district.

Inside, the high, vaulted ceiling is supported by ranks of fluted and octagonal columns, constructed in alternating plain and smooth sandstone. Though minimally decorated, there is a warm and comfortable feel to the inside of the church.

### 2: Liverpool's King Kong!

Across Mossley Hill Road from the church, are halls of residence for the University of Liverpool. These stand within the walls of what was once the private Rosemont estate and which, in 1932, became the location for the very popular Liverpool Zoological Garden.

Here were a wide selection of birds, reptiles and animals, amongst which were ‘Simla’, an old, female, Burmese elephant who gave rides on her back. There was also a fearsome lion named ‘Nero’, who killed his tamer, and some leopards, one of which mauled his keeper to death too. This all happened in 1938, which was a bad year for the zoo because this was also when its most popular attraction of all, ‘Mickey the Chimp’, escaped and caused havoc.

Mickey was a very large, old, cantankerous male chimpanzee who loved to play football with visitors. He particularly enjoyed standing in goal whilst they tried to get the ball past him. If they did though, which was not often, Mickey could get very bad-tempered and would throw the balls back at the visitors. One day, so many goals were being scored against him that the chimp lost his temper completely and began rampaging around the zoo. He then bounded over the boundary wall and ended up in the playground at nearby Sudley Primary School.

Here, he attacked Mr. Gill, one of the teachers, before eventually climbing onto the roof of 29 Lugard Road.

From this vantage point he began throwing roof tiles and chimney pots at the people who were desperately trying to persuade him to come down so that they could recapture him. These included 15 policemen, a lion-tamer, a number of zoo keepers, and a local coal merchant! Mickey, rather like King Kong, refused to come down.

In the end, the huge ape was shot and fatally wounded by an army marksman from nearby Fulwood Barracks. He fell into the yard at the back of the house, where he was found by the

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police as he lay dying on the flagstones. The marksman then fired two, final, fatal shots into Mickey.

Mickey was stuffed and mounted, and put on display in Lewis's Store on Ranelagh Street. But, he was lost forever when, in the May Blitz of 1941, the store was destroyed by German bombs.

### 3: The Carnatic and The Mentor

Carnatic Road takes its name from the grand Carnatic House that once occupied the site where more University Halls of Residence now stand. This mansion was built by an incompetent but very lucky shipbuilder by the name of Peter Baker: Lucky, because, around 1777, he built the 400-ton ship, the 'Mentor', for a private buyer. He had made such a bad job of the vessel though, that the customer refused to take it, so Baker decided to send it to sea himself.

He did so as a 'Privateer'; a sort of government-sanctioned pirate, to see if he could capture and plunder any merchant ships of England's enemies, the French and the Spanish. Not wanting to go on this enterprise himself, being afraid of water, Mentor was captained by his equally incompetent and cowardly friend, John Dawson.

However, whilst at sea, on the 28th October 1778, purely by chance, Captain Dawson stumbled upon the large, French merchant ship, 'Carnatic'. There was a problem though, because Mentor carried only 28 guns, whereas Carnatic was armed with 78 guns. Spineless Dawson decided to slink away before the Carnatic spotted him, but the Mentor's carpenter, one of the few skilled seamen on board, pointed out to his Captain that all of Carnatic's guns were, in fact, dummy ones.

Dawson was so desperate for easy plunder that he overcame his fear and fired a few warning shots towards Carnatic. To everybody's absolute amazement, the French captain immediately surrendered his ship, crew, and cargo without a struggle! The Mentor's crew boarded Carnatic and claimed her as an English prize of war.

To Dawson's further astonishment, when they took an inventory of her cargo, they discovered that she was carrying vast quantities of exotic spices and other trade goods, worth £400,000 (the value today would be more than £29 million). The cargo also included a box of diamonds, valued at more than £135,000 (almost £10 million at today's prices).

The news reached Liverpool before the Mentor and, as she drew near the dockside of her home port, church bells were ringing out and cheering crowds, which included the ecstatic Peter Baker, lined the wharf. The Mentor's crew were now rich men, and Baker was wealthy beyond his wildest dreams. He went on to buy the Manor of Garston and build his luxurious mansion, which he named Carnatic House.

### 4: Glorious Sefton Park

In 1867, as part of its continuing 'Lungs of Liverpool' plan, Liverpool Corporation bought 375 acres of land, for £263,687, from the Molyneux family who were by this time the Earls of Sefton. The new park was to be named after the Earl, and the perimeter road around the park is Croxteth Drive, which was named after his family seat at Croxteth Hall in West Derby.

Designed by Edouard André, the Gardener-in-Chief to the City of Paris and gardener to Napoleon III, and his partner, Lewis Hornblower of Liverpool, Sefton Park was opened, in 1872. The Guest of Honour was Queen Victoria's son, Prince Arthur, and the vast crowds were entertained with a Grand Bazaar and Horse-Leaping, and by a special pageant and boating on the large lake.

There is still the original perimeter horse-riding track around the park, which was designed to emulate Rotten Row in Hyde Park. The local gentry would take to their carriages or horses out on Sunday afternoons, and parade around the park to the general delight and entertainment (mostly) of the promenading visitors strolling around the beautiful, new, public recreation ground.

#### 5: The Palm House

The stunning Sefton Park Palm House stands near the centre of the large park. It is built of cast and wrought iron, and stands over 80 feet high on a red granite base. It was donated to the City by the millionaire, Henry Yates Thompson, who was the grand nephew of Richard Vaughan Yates, the creator of nearby Princes Park.

The Palm House opened in 1896, at a cost of over £10,000 to build and plant out, and it contains many pieces of sculpture.

The great greenhouse is surrounded by eight, large, marble and bronze statues of renowned world-explorers, naturalists, and botanists; including Charles Darwin, Captain Cook, Mercator, and Christopher Columbus.

In 1939, the glass was painted in camouflage colours to prevent moonlight being reflected from the surface, and so attracting the bombs of the German Luftwaffe. Nevertheless, in 1941, a nearby bomb exploded and completely shattered the glass but, fortunately, left the rest of the structure standing though severely destabilised. It was re-glazed and re-opened in 1956.

In 1997, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage made grants to allow a complete restoration of the much-loved building to take place. The Palm House was re-opened on September 6th 2001, to much public joy and celebration, and it is now the centre of cultural, artistic, and botanical life in the heart of the park.

#### 6: Peter Pan, Eros, and The Aviary

In the grounds surrounding the Palm House stands the statue of Peter Pan. This is a replica of the monument in Kensington Gardens in London, and is an attractive bronze of the 'boy who never grew up', surrounded by fairies and woodland creatures. This was a gift, in 1928, 'to the children visitors to Sefton Park', by Mr George Audley, who was a wealthy businessman from Birkdale near Southport.

At the same time he also donated large, detailed models of Wendy's Hut and the 'Jolly Roger' Pirate Ship, also from the famous childrens' story, as well as two small cannons, said to be from the Royal Yacht. All of these delightful features of the park were unveiled during a special summer pageant by a niece of Sir James Barrie, who was the author of 'Peter Pan'. Sadly, today, only Peter Pan survives.

In 1932, George Audley also donated to the park, an aluminium replica of the Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain (Eros Statue) from Piccadilly Circus in London but, unfortunately, he died before it was unveiled. This has recently been magnificently restored, and stands near the café in the centre of the park.

Behind the cafe are the cages of the former aviary, set in an ornamental semi-circle. There are no birds here anymore, but the cages have been planted out with shrubs and flowers; adding yet another interesting attraction to this wonderful public park.

## 7: Lark Lane

From the western perimeter of the park, and running down to Aigburth Road, is Lark Lane. This is a very attractive, mid-Victorian thoroughfare, which still has some delightful buildings. Indeed, it is worth exploring some of the roads that lead off the Lane to the left; especially the curious, characterful, Pelham Grove, Hadassah Grove, and Bickerton Street.

The Lane was purpose-built during the construction of Sefton Park. It was designed as a shopping street to service the new community that was being established in all the ranks of new mansion houses and attractive terraces around the park perimeter. It was the sale of these properties that funded the creation of Sefton Park. Lark Lane had, and to a large extent it still has, all the essential shops and services to resource a large and diverse community: From a traditional barber's shop and hairdressing salons to clothes shops; from cake and sweet shops to fishmongers and greengrocers; and from general grocers and a delicatessen to a florists.

There are also a wide range of more eccentric and quaint establishments, such as a New Age shop, second-hand book shop, furniture upholsterers, funeral parlour, fire-place restorer, and antique shops. However, where Lark Lane excels is as a place in which to eat, drink, and be merry!

I would particularly recommend a gentle stroll or cycle through Sefton Park early on a summer or autumn evening, followed by a meal or a drink on the Lane. This is when the street really comes to life, and with a particularly 'bohemian' flavour, as this is the favourite watering spot for students and the local intelligentsia who live in the surrounding houses.

## Walk 5 - Olive Mount and Wavertree Ridge

Wavertree Village nestles around the foot and flanks of Olive Mount, and is mentioned in the Domesday Book as 'Wauretree'. It is likely that the name of this district means 'a settlement near a spring on a wasteland', indicating that this prehistoric community was centred on the local spring that ultimately, in medieval times, became 'The Monks' Well'. However, 'Wavertree' could also just as easily mean what it says – 'a place of waving trees' – possibly aspen.

It was in the village, in 1867, that large standing stones from a megalithic tomb were discovered. This stone-age burial place was on the Mount just up the hill from the Monks' Well. This shows that, even from the earliest times, Wavertree must have been quite a well-established community of some significance, if the local Anglo-Saxon tribes decided to bury their dead here.

With the tomb, the Victorian archaeologists unearthed flint arrowheads and scrapers, alongside Bronze Age burial urns containing human remains. These suggest a pre-1000 BC settlement, making Wavertree one of Liverpool's most historic local districts.



## Points of Interest

### 1: Wavertree Lock-Up

In the centre of Wavertree Village is the village green, and upon this stands the Sheriff's Lock-Up. This small triangle of land is the only surviving piece of common land in the City, so, if you have any livestock that you wish to graze, this is the place to do it!

During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Wavertree was significant enough to warrant its own Sheriff. He carried a whistle and handcuffs, and also a beautifully decorated truncheon. Although crime had been rare in the village, tourists began to come to Wavertree from the town of Liverpool, to swim in the village lake, picnic on the green, and drink in the numerous taverns. Many of these were getting drunk and making a nuisance of themselves so, in 1796, the Lock-Up was built to accommodate them!

The Village Sheriff was now equipped with a handcart that had been built especially for transporting the inebriates from the pubs to the Lock-Up. He would wheel this up and down Church Road, Mill Lane, and High Street, collecting 'customers' for overnight accommodation! However, the building originally had a flat roof, through which friends of the prisoners would frequently knock holes, aiding many to escape by lowering down ropes or ladders. But that was OK as far as the Sheriff was concerned, because he was paid for each person that he locked up, not for how many of them were still in the Village Gaol the following morning!

In 1832, the Lock-Up served as a temporary mortuary for victims of a local cholera epidemic and, during 1845 and 1846, it housed refugees from the Irish Potato Famine who had no other form of shelter. By 1852, the building had passed its useful life and was subsequently 'beautified', by James Picton in 1869, with a pointed roof and a weather-vane. It is now carefully maintained as one of the many attractive features of the village.

### 2: The Monks' Well and Underground Brook

Up Mill Lane from the Lock-Up, and at the end of the railings along the childrens' playground (which was once the village lake), you will come to the Medieval Monks' Well. This is believed at one time to have served a local Cistercian monastery on the Mount.

The Monk's Well is in an excellent state of preservation, and still bears an original Latin text, which reads: 'QUI NON DAT QUIOD HABET DOEMON INFRA RIDET. ANNO 1414'. This freely translates as, 'He who here does nought bestow, the Devil laughs at him below'. This inscription does appear to be original, but the old Medieval cross had long been lost and so, in an attempt at restoration, it was replaced in the late 19th century and inscribed, according to tradition, 'DEUS DEDIT, HOMO BEBIT'. This translates as, 'God gives, man drinks'.

The well used to stand further back from the road, at a point where the spring bubbled out from the sandstone beneath Olive Mount. It is uncertain when the well was moved to its present location, but it is certainly recorded as being here at least 600 years ago.

This spring not only fed the well, but also the village lake. From the lake, before the area became built-up, what was known as the Lower Brook ran down behind where Wavertree Manor once stood, across the land now forming Wavertree Playground, to run alongside

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what is now the Brook House Pub on Smithdown Road. Now culverted, the brook still follows this route, and then flows via Greenbank Park Lake to become the 'River Jordan', when it feeds into Sefton Park Lake. From here, again through culverts, it then runs under Aigburth Vale and Otterspool Park and into the River Mersey.

### 3: The Sarah Pooley Clock Tower

At the heart of the village is a busy traffic roundabout. On this can be found a former waiting room for the tram service that used to run through here. Standing next to this is a tall, impressive, late-Victorian clock-tower, generally referred to as Picton Clock.

The clock was named after Sir James Allanson Picton (1832-1889), who was a resident of Wavertree. Picton was also locally and nationally renowned as an historian, author, and architect, who designed many buildings in and around Liverpool. These included parts of the Central Libraries on William Brown Street, and the Picton Reading Room is named after him.

In 1847, Picton constructed a grand house for himself, built in local red sandstone. He named this 'Sandy Knowe', and it still stands at the top of Olive Mount, which is 215 feet above sea level. This is now a nursing home. Knighted by Queen Victoria, in 1881, Sir James was a much-respected individual in his home village as well as in Liverpool, and he was a great benefactor to both places.

Picton was supported in all he did by his devoted wife, Sarah, with whom he was deeply in love, and whose maiden name had been Pooley. Tragically though, in 1879, and after fifty years of very happy marriage, Sarah died. James was bereft and, as a memorial to his wife, he designed and built the clock-tower in the village.

What was officially named as the 'Sarah Pooley Clock Tower' was formally unveiled in 1884, and this bears a number of embellishments and inscriptions. The most meaningful of these reads, 'Time wasted is existence; used is life'.

### 4: George Harrison's Birthplace

It was here, at No. 12 Arnold Grove, on 25th February 1943, that the late and much-missed George Harrison was born. His dad was a bus driver whilst his mother kept house for the family.

Eventually going on to become the youngest member of The Beatles, George grew up in what was a very cramped house for the Harrison family. So, on the 2nd January 1950, they moved to 25 Upton Green, Speke. At the time this was considered a socially-upward move but, on the 1st October 1962 they moved again, this time to 174 Macketts Lane in Hunts Cross ~ an even posher residence!

As a young boy George attended Dovedale Primary School, which is in a road off Penny Lane, and he was two years behind John Lennon who was also a pupil there. As a Grammar School boy, George then went to Liverpool Institute, where he was one year behind Paul McCartney: Liverpool is a relatively small place and such coincidences are common.

A dedicated follower of the Hindu, Hare Krishna movement, but always a very heavy smoker, George died from lung cancer, in 2001, aged only 58. He was cremated, and his

ashes were scattered in the Ganges and Yamuna rivers in India. He died a very wealthy man, and left around £100 million in his will.

#### 5: The Smallest House in Britain

At the right-hand end of the Cock and Bottle pub can be seen the small front door and tiny windows of what was once the Smallest House in Britain. This was built, in 1850, to fill in the side passage alongside the inn. When finished, the house was 6 feet wide and 14 feet from front to back.

There are stories of a couple raising 8 children in the tiny, two-storey home, and also of another, very large resident. To get up to his bed he had to climb the stairs sideways, but only after the staircase had been widened to take his weight, from its original width of 8 inches to 16 inches!

The last inhabitants of the house were Mr. & Mrs. Richard Greaves, who moved out in 1925. The miniature house then remained empty, until 1952, when one of the side walls was knocked through to become part of the lounge of the pub next-door. Because it was then no longer a self-contained home, this curiosity could no longer claim the title of 'smallest house'. This is now held by a house in Conway, in North Wales.

Very recently however, the side wall of the house was put back, restoring the building to its original size and shape. However, behind the front door now is a normal-sized staircase, which fills its width, and that leads up to some new flats in the attic of the Cock and Bottle. So it is still, no longer, the smallest house.

#### 6: The Locked Gates of Wavertree Hall

The Royal School for the Blind in Wavertree was built, on Church Road North, in 1898. This stands on the site of Wavertree Hall, also known as Hamilton Hall, which was once the family seat of the important and wealthy Perceval Family. They were descendants from Norse invaders.

The Hall later became the home of slave and salt merchant, John Blackburne, who was Mayor of Liverpool in 1788, and who also built Blackburne House on Hope Street.

In the mid-to-late 19th Century, the Hall was held by the wealthy Squire of Wavertree. However, his daughter eloped with coachman, one Edward Murphy, who was a Roman Catholic. Edward was tall and handsome, with a muscular body, dark hair, and pale-blue eyes, so it is easy to see why the young girl would have fallen for his undoubted attractions.

The elopement horrified the militantly Protestant Squire, who was so angry that he immediately wrote his daughter out of his will, and ordered that the gates to the grounds of the Hall be permanently locked. He also decreed that the path from the gates to the front door be ploughed up so that she 'could never return home'. Instructions to this effect were written into the deeds of the property, and they remain in force.

This is why a new gateway had to be cut through the still existing perimeter wall, and why the original gates, which also still stand, remain to this day, permanently locked and sealed, and the path grassed over!

The star-crossed lovers are believed to have spent some time in Ireland, later returning to Liverpool, where they lived in great poverty in Eldon Street off Scotland Road.

## 7: The Haunted Mill

The roads that lead off Church Road North, opposite The Bluecoat School and Holy Trinity Church, are built on what was once a large field. However, this land was only created when a very large and deep quarry was filled in, in the early decades of the 20th century.

This quarry had been excavated from the late 1700s onwards, and surrounded a medieval windmill that was owned by successive monarchs. This meant that the mill could not be touched so, as the quarry grew, the 'King's Mill' ended up standing out on a long, narrow promontory of rock.

Over the centuries the quarry was dug deeper and deeper, and wider and wider, until a series of fatalities and accidents began to occur. These started, in 1866, when 10-year-old Richard Matthews was struck by the vanes of the mill and killed. Many such nasty incidents now began to happen, including the miller's daughter having her hair ripped out by the rotating vanes.

The local villagers were now convinced that the quarry had been dug so deep that a demon had been awoken and was taking his revenge by causing all these accidents. The villagers sought out the village priest for help. He ordered that all digging should stop forever. He also instructed that, every night, the miller should chain up the vanes of his mill in the position of a Holy Cross. The shadow then cast by the moonlight would touch the four corners of the quarry, keeping the demon at bay. The priest's orders were followed and, from that time, there were no more tragic incidents!

The ancient mill ceased grinding corn in 1890, and it was damaged beyond repair in a great storm, in 1895. It was abandoned until 1916, when it was finally demolished. The site of the Old Haunted Mill is now at numbers 35 and 37 Beverley Road, where its original mill stones can be seen in the front garden.

However, the demon does not rest entirely easily, as this part of Wavertree remains one of the most haunted districts of Liverpool.

## Walk 6 - Childwall Hill

Ancient Childwall got its name from the old Norse words, 'kelda' meaning a well, and 'wall' meaning field, and it is listed in the Domesday Book.

During the 18th century, one of the new breed of Liverpool entrepreneurs and a member of the new middle-classes, was a wealthy attorney called Isaac Greene. In 1718, he purchased the Manors of Much and Little Woolton, Childwall, and Childwall Hall. The previous year he had already acquired the Manors of West Derby, Wavertree, and Everton from the Earls of Derby. Through Isaac's female descendants, Woolton passed into the ownership of Bamber Gascoigne of Childwall, and then to the Marquess of Salisbury.



## Points of Interest

### 1: Childwall Hall and Childwall Woods

At the gateway into Childwall Woods stands the lodge house to the former Childwall Hall Manor. Both buildings were built in 1780, by the famous architect John Nash, but only the lodge remains.

The estate had been bought, in 1718, by Isaac Green, and his many estates and manors eventually passed to his grandson, Bamber Gascoigne II (1758-1824), who built Childwall Hall on the site of a much older manor house. Bamber was MP for Liverpool, and the ancestor of his 'University Challenge' namesake.

Childwall Hall and grounds were subsequently let to a series of tenants until, in 1922, it became a golf club. When the club's lease ran out in 1939, the City Council bought fifty acres of the surrounding land from Lord Salisbury who, in 1947, then gave a further 4½ acres and the hall as a gift. After the War, it was planned to use Childwall Hall for a new County College, but it was found to be riddled with dry rot and too expensive to renovate. In 1949, it had to be pulled down and a new college was built on the site, which opened in 1955.

In 1960, the wood, which was once part of the landscaped park that surrounded the Hall, was separated from the rest of the college grounds and opened just to local residents. In 1966, the wood and surrounding lands were then opened to the general public. 'Childwall Wood and Fields' remains public open space, and is one of the City's Local Nature Reserves.

With the 'ravine' – once the coach drive up to the entrance of the Hall, the stands of trees (some of which are quite ancient), the natural plantings, the wildlife habitats, the generous ranges of rhododendron bushes, and the meandering pathways, Childwall Woods makes a delightful place to visit.

### 2: Lime Pictures Studios

Childwall College closed in 1989, when the building and grounds were sold to The Mersey Television Company. This was opened, in 1982, by Phil Redmond, who renamed the site Campus Manor.

The long-running Channel 4 drama, Brookside, was filmed on the studio sets of Campus Manor, although the main Brookside Housing Estate was actually on the borders of the Croxteth Hall Estate, in West Derby. The very first episode of the soap opera formed part of the television channel's opening night on-air, and production of the popular programme continued uninterrupted for 21 years, with over 2,900 episodes.

Mersey Television was sold to All3Media, in 2005. In 2006, the company changed its name to LiMe Pictures with 'LiMe' reflecting the company's roots in 'Liverpool and Merseyside', and it is now one of Liverpool's biggest employers, with over 500 staff. This means that the company is the UK's largest independent producer of film and television drama. Equally popular television programmes, such as Hollyoaks (Channel 4), and Grange Hill (BBC), have been filmed on the site, and LiMe is currently working on a wide range of new and imaginative drama projects.

### 3: Childwall Abbey Inn

The Abbey has been an inn from the early 17th century and once had a door dated 1608, but that came from a farmhouse in Allerton. The origins of the pub are certainly Medieval though, and many archaeologists now believe that all or part of the present building, although altered over the centuries, was once the Chapel of St Thomas the Martyr, which dated from 1484.

As well as offering good food and ales, The Childwall Abbey also, until the mid-20th century, provided accommodation. In fact, at the end of the 19th and during the early years of the 20th centuries, the Abbey was popular with actors travelling to perform in Liverpool. The renowned thespians, Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, and the author of 'Peter Pan', J M Barrie, have all left their names scratched in the window of the upstairs room facing the Parish Church of All Saints, and overlooking Childwall Valley.

During the reign of Queen Victoria, the landlady of the Abbey was Jane Rimmer. For 40 years this formidable but popular and respected woman ran the important inn with a firm hand. During her time, quoits began to be played on a special pitch behind the inn, but bowls have been played there since the 16th century, if not before! But Jane also presided over a special annual ceremony that took place in the inn.

Each year, at a formal dinner held in the Childwall Abbey Inn, a local worthy gentleman would be elected as a 'Freeman of Childwall'. To qualify for this honour though, the candidate had to demonstrate that he was "a free drinker, a free player, a thorough smoker, a jolly fox-hunter, and a dear lover of the female sex"!

### 4: All Saints Church

All Saint's Church was built around 1178, on the site of a much earlier Saxon church, and was very important in south Liverpool, especially during the Middle Ages. Ten townships fell within the Parish of Childwall: Childwall, Hale, Halewood, Halebank, Speke, Garston, Allerton, Much Woolton (with Thingwall), Little Woolton (Gateacre), and Wavertree.

This is the oldest church within the boundaries of Liverpool, and its architecture outside is impressive, especially the animal gargoyles on the tower. However, the interior is stunning. With its carved panelling and beautiful, Victorian pews, as well as the memorial brasses and hatchments, the church is well worth a visit.

The graveyard surrounding the church is very old and very deep, with many layers of bodies. This is why one has to walk down steps to get inside the building, because the level of the burial ground has been raised so many times.

Such raised churchyards are not uncommon in England, and even in small villages with an average of only 250 inhabitants, for example, at least several thousand people would have died and been buried each century. This means that in an average country churchyard you can expect there to be around 20,000 bodies lying under the turf!

The oldest tombstones at Childwall date from 1620 and 1686. There are none older because before the 17th century ordinary people seldom had their graves marked.

### 5: The Lepers' Squint

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Leprosy was common in England, especially in towns, and during the 12th and 13th centuries in particular. The dreadful disfigurements associated with this highly contagious disease were seen by many as divine punishment for sin. Because of this they believed that there was the danger of moral as well as physical contamination, and so sufferers of leprosy were forcibly excluded from the community.

This meant that these unfortunate people had to establish their own settlements, or colonies. There was such a leper colony in Childwall Valley, adjacent to the Childwall Brook and a large pond. This was a mile or so down the hill behind All Saints Church and its graveyard.

However, lepers were still expected to attend church, but were not allowed to sit even at the rear of a church whilst a service was in progress, because their disease was so contagious. Nevertheless, they still needed to make their confessions to the parish priest; hence the need for a 'Squint' or 'Hagioscope' as it is known in architectural terms.

At Childwall, the Squint survives as what appears to be an arched window, recessed into the base of an outside wall of the church, to a depth of about eighteen inches. This can be found at ground level behind the large, sandstone, war memorial cross. Look close though, and it can be seen that this was once, in fact, a recess that a fully grown adult could stand upright in.

Before the level of the graveyard was raised, lepers would stand in the recess and speak through a grille. Standing in a similar recess inside the church was the priest, separated from the lepers by the wall, and he would hear each person's confession and offer absolution. After the service the lepers would then make their way back down to their valley colony.

## 6: Childwall Village Cross and The Wells

The remnants of the Village Cross are also to be found near Score Lane, standing at the top of a stepped footpath known as Crossways. This was probably the market cross for the village, and is believed to have been originally set up over 700 years ago.

There were once two wells in the village, again showing how important and busy it once must have been. One of these, known as the 'Monks' Bath', was originally located on Childwall Abbey Road, which leads into the village past the woods and the old manor grounds. This well dried up around 1840. The second, and probably even older well, stood on the appropriately named Well Lane, but this was covered over some 150 years ago. However, in 1965, it was rediscovered when a nearby wall was being rebuilt. It was around 5 feet wide, and had a set of steps leading down to where a water source still exists. This was re-buried for safety, and is now inaccessible.

## 7: The Bloody Acre Field and The Childwall Death Coach

Just a little way along Score Lane from the church is an area of attractive landscaped parkland, officially known as Score Lane Gardens, but also referred to as 'The Bloody Acre Field'. It is believed that a particularly violent skirmish took place here during the English Civil War (1642-1649). This was probably fought between the once staunchly Catholic

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people of Childwall and the Protestant Puritan forces of Parliament, during local attempts to overthrow the Reformation.

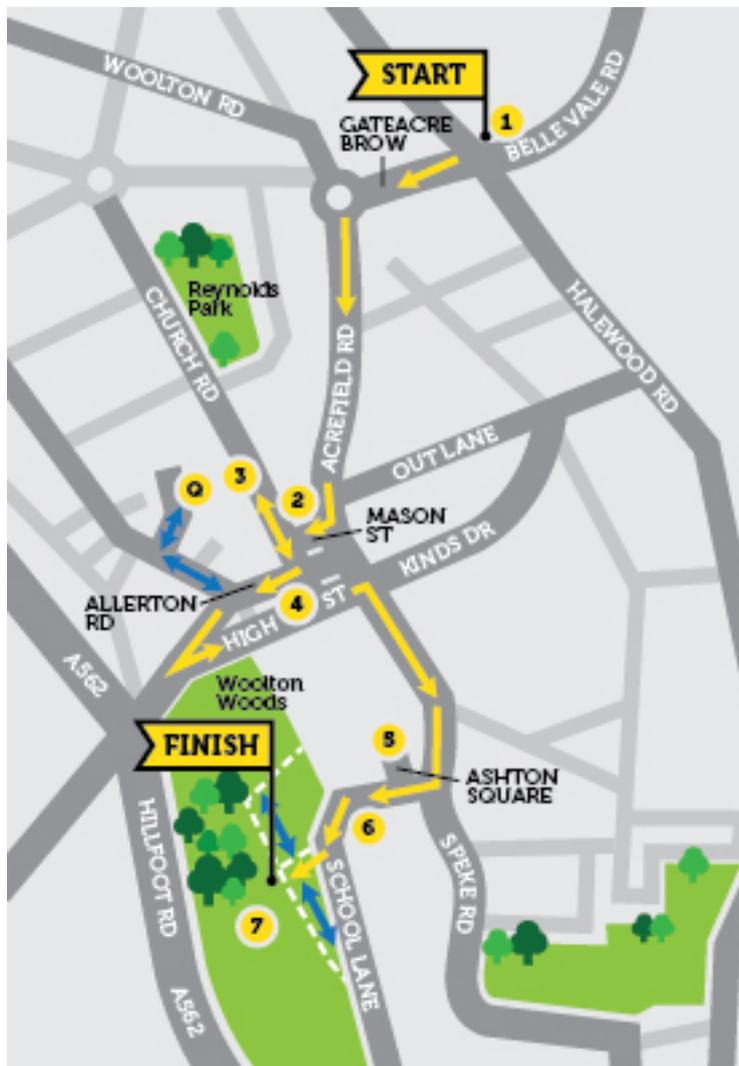
The field is also where, if you are very unfortunate, you can hear the galloping hooves and see the ghostly form of the dreaded, driverless, 'Childwall Death Coach'; said to forewarn of impending doom!

It can be seen at midnight, being pulled by panting horses and driving at breakneck speed, up from the valley behind the parish church, and across the Bloody Acre Field. Then, it crosses Score Lane in front of the church and then it races up Childwall Priory Road, where it vanishes across what was once the Great Heath.

## Walk 7 - Woolton Ridge and Camp Hill

The name of Woolton derives from 'Wulfa's Tun' or 'Wulfa's Farmstead', which is probably named after the Teutonic chieftain who settled in the area and first cultivated it.

The Village and Manor have passed through the hands of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem; King Henry VIII; Queen Elizabeth I; and King James I. In 1609, James sold it to William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby. From him it passed to Isaac Green and then the estate and Manor passed through Isaac's daughter, to her son, Bamber Gascoyne II of Childwall (MP for Liverpool 1780-96). Finally, the Marquesses of Salisbury inherited the estates, together with the manorial rights to Wavertree and Childwall.



## Points of Interest

### 1: Gateacre Village Green

The name Gateacre is Anglo-Saxon, and comes from 'gata', meaning 'the way' to the 'acre' field of Much Woolton (Woolton Village). Gateacre was never a township in its own right, just a small, rural, village community, surrounded on all sides by small farms and stretches of open heathland. It was also known as Little Woolton.

Gateacre and the surrounding district stayed quiet and rural until after the Second World War, but the heart of 'Little Woolton', and despite its very busy crossroads, is still a delightful place to visit.

The oldest buildings in the village are probably Grange Lodge, in Grange Lane (a house that retains some 17th century features), and the Unitarian Chapel, in Gateacre Brow (built in 1700 for an English Presbyterian congregation). The chapel is entered through an ancient lych gate, and its bell dates from 1723.

Also in Grange Lane are former stables, and Paradise Row, the original inhabitants of which, pre-1750, are thought to have been out-workers producing components for the Prescot watchmaking industry.

Sir Andrew Barclay Walker, a wealthy Scottish-born brewer who got his knighthood for giving the Walker Art Gallery to Liverpool, built Gateacre Grange for himself, on Rose Brow. In 1887, to mark the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, he donated the land in front of the Black Bull Pub to the village, as a Village Green. Here he also placed the bronze bust of the Queen.

Another important local resident, John Hays Wilson, was a brassfounder and Chairman of Liverpool Town Council's Water Committee. He was responsible for initiating the Lake Vyrnwy scheme, which piped fresh water into Liverpool from North Wales. Wilson also, in 1883, paid for the hexagonal gazebo that sits on the village green. Appropriately enough this once housed a drinking fountain. The sandstone shelter has intricately carved figures on it, including animals, mermaids playing instruments, and a Liver Bird. There is also a very large and gruesome gargoyle, which appears to be leaping out from one side.

### 2: Woolton Picture House

Off Church Road in Woolton Village is narrow and steep Mason Street, on which can be found the delightful Woolton Picture House. This is the last remaining independent cinema in Liverpool, and it opened on Boxing Day, in December 1927, showing a programme of popular silent films.

The auditorium originally seated over 800 people on rows of wooden benches but, during the 1930s, the screen was brought forward to allow large, state-of-the-art speakers to be installed. It was then that the benches were all replaced with plush cinema seating. Remaining open throughout the war years, and surviving the bombing raids, the cinema was a vital and popular place of entertainment for the people of Woolton.

In 1980, the Picture House was refurbished with the front being fitted with a new canopy and illuminated signs. In addition to a wall-to-wall screen proscenium, carpeting, and 265 luxury armchair seats, the Picture House now became a 5-Star cinema!

In 2004, the cinema modernised by replacing the old reel projectors with a digital projector and a new screen; complete with the latest sound technology. In 2007, Woolton Picture House celebrated its 80th Birthday, and then became the oldest single-screen cinema in Liverpool. In March 2009, Woolton Picture House was listed as one of the top 20 'Best Film Venues in Britain', and was describing as the Country's 'art deco gem'.

### 3: St Peter's Church, Eleanor Rigby & Lennon and McCartney

See if you can find Eleanor Rigby's tombstone standing in the front of the graveyard of St Peter's Church. The woman who gave her name to the famous Beatle's song is buried here, as are the former Liverpool FC Manager, Bob Paisley, and John Lennon's Aunt Mimi and his Uncle George.

Over the Road from the church, behind the St Peter & St Paul Centre, which was once the village school, stands the still thriving and popular church hall. It was in this building, on 6th July 1957, that Paul McCartney was introduced to John Lennon, by Ivan Vaughan, who was their mutual friend. Paul had been brought along to see John playing at the church concert, as a member of the Quarrymen Skiffle Group. Paul was impressed by John's talent, but the boy's own musical skill and enthusiasm made just as much of an impression on the older youth. John soon invited the talented youngster to join the Quarrymen.

The stage on which the Quarrymen were performing that night was dismantled when the hall was renovated some years ago. It was placed in store but has now been restored and is on display in The Museum of Liverpool, on the Pier Head waterfront.

### 4: Woolton Village

Woolton Village is one of those places where walking and cycling around is an absolute must. By exploring all the roads, streets, alleyways, and court dwellings, which branch off from one side of the road, you will be surprised by just how much of old Woolton remains.

Have a look in Chapel Place, and then stroll up Quarry Street, as far as Clay Cross Road on the right.

On the left as you walk up, take a look down Pit Place, and down Roddick, Rose, and Castle Streets, which will give you a perspective on what working life might have been like in Woolton in the 19th century. Opposite Castle Street is a public footpath named Mill Stile, which will lead you over the top of the quarry, to give you a bird's eye view of the housing estate below and of the surrounding village.

Double back along Quarry Street and this time branch off into The Old Quarry, which is the centre of the quarry; St Mary's Court, in which you will find the former Methodist Chapel, now the public library, which was built in 1834. Have a look down Mount Street too, and then St Mary's Street, where you will find the local Catholic Church of St Mary's, set back in a secluded area and on its own small mount.

At the corner of Church and Allerton Roads, behind some railings, is the sunken car park. This was originally a small lake, known as the Lodes Pond, and was once a main water supply to the village. Cattle, sheep, and horses were brought here, from surrounding fields and farms, to drink, right up until the late 1950s.

#### 5: Woolton Hall and Ashton Square

Now boarded up and hidden behind high walls on Speke Road, stands Woolton Hall. This was built on the site of a much older structure, possibly dating back to the 16th century. In 1772, the ownership of the Hall passed to Nicholas Ashton. He was a Liverpool shipping and salt merchant who decided that the original parts of the building were old-fashioned. Ashton commissioned the renowned architect Robert Adam to remodel the interior and to design the carriage-front.

At the same time, the work of the estate was expanded and purpose-built cottages for the estate-workers were constructed around the property. The most significant surviving example of these is Ashton Square, which is actually a narrow terrace in a cul-de-sac. This runs to the right, off School Lane, and is a delightful, secluded hamlet of cottages, hidden away from view.

The Ashton family sold Woolton Hall in 1865, and it then passed through a number of ownerships until, in 1902, it was bought by the Sisters of Notre Dame. They used the Hall as their religious house whilst they built a new Convent and the Girls School next to the Hall. The nuns moved out in 1948, and Woolton Hall became neglected and it remains almost derelict. It now stands forlornly, behind boards, barbed wire, and undergrowth.

#### 6: Tudor School House

Just a little way up School Lane, past the entrance to Ashton Square and up the hill on the left, stands the old School House. The date-stone says '1610', but it is very likely that the building is much older. This was probably one of the earliest elementary schools to be set up in Britain, and probably actually pre-dates its counterpart at Walton-on-the-Hill. In fact, the Catholic martyr, St John Almond, declared at his trial, in 1612, that he was educated at a school in Much Woolton, and it was probably this one.

The school is unusually well-built, and the stones that make up its walls are almost 12 inches thick, and some are 4 feet long. As well as serving the local community as a school, the small building has also been a chapel, a cottage, a barn, and a cowshed! It is now a pre-school nursery, with its original private grounds still adjacent to it behind protective railings.

#### 7: Camp Hill & Woolton Woods

On this high hilltop, overlooking Woolton, Allerton, and Hunts Cross, and with magnificent views across the river, is Woolton Woods. And this is more than simply a stand of trees. In 1888, the remarkable gardener, Harry Corlett (1866-1946), was employed by the Ashton Family, who owned all of this land. Corlett was a skilled and imaginative horticulturalist who was responsible for revitalising the estate and the walled garden in particular.

In 1921, Corlett created an Old English Garden in the woods and, in 1927, he also installed the floral cuckoo clock, which once sounded the quarters and the hours through a speaker in the trees overhead.

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When it opened, the clock had 18,670 plants in the design and the 8-foot-long minute hand weighed 72lbs when fully loaded. This remains a feature of the garden, which, with the woodlands and the open hill top, is open to the public. When Harry Corlett died, his ashes were scattered in his beloved Old English Garden.

In 1948, during the demolition of some buildings at the top of the hill, remnants of an ancient, fortified, Iron-Age encampment were found. This discovery proved what people had believed for centuries, and explained how the hill had long before been given the name of 'Camp Hill'. Since before the Romans first came to Britain, in 55BC, and perhaps as early as 150BC, the 250 feet-high sandstone Ridge of Camp Hill was the home of the local, Celtic tribespeople, the Brigantes. They fought naked and painted all over with blue woad. Being attacked by hairy, naked, blue, ancient Scousers must have been terrifying for the invading Romans!